

AGENCY NAME: Town of Amherst
 AGENCY ADDRESS: 4 Boltwood Avenue, Amherst, MA 01002
 AGENCY PHONE NO: (413) 259 - 3040 CONTACT PERSON: David Ziomek
 2011 CDBG REQUEST: \$80,000.00

Cover Sheet – Non-Social Service Activity

1. Project Name: *East Pleasant Street: Affordable Housing Feasibility Study and Mitigation of Hazardous Materials*
2. Project Description (1-2 sentences)
The Town proposes to hire a consultant(s) to complete an affordable housing feasibility study of the Hawthorne Property at 235 East Pleasant Street. This study will evaluate the rehabilitation of the house for use as an affordable two-family structure, providing preliminary plans and cost estimates. If reuse is not possible, the study will develop demolition plans and preliminary site plans for new housing. In addition, the Town will hire consultants to remove hazardous materials (asbestos, lead paint, soil contamination) from the house site.
3. Project Location: *235 East Pleasant Street (Town Center)*
4. Budget Request: *\$80,000.00*
5. Type of Activity (check one):
 - ☒ Rehabilitation
 - ☐ Acquisition
 - ☐ Demolition/clearance
 - ☐ Infrastructure
 - ☐ Public Facility
 - ☐ Architectural Barrier Removal
 - ☒ Other – please explain: *Planning Activity to benefit low/ moderate income persons*
6. Demonstrate Consistency with Community Development Strategy
The Community Development Strategy identifies affordable housing, housing for homeless individuals and workforce housing as a priority reflected in the master plan.
7. Demonstrate Consistency with Sustainable Development Principles
2. Advance Equity: Provide technical and strategic support for inclusive community planning and decision making to ensure social, economic, and environmental justice.
6. Expand Housing Opportunities: Support the construction and rehabilitation of homes to meet the needs of people of all abilities, income levels, and household types.
8. Demonstrate Consistency with Target Area requirements
The Hawthorne site will ultimately be used for affordable housing in the Town Center.

9. National Objective

Benefit to low- and moderate-income persons

Estimate the number of low- and moderate-income persons to benefit from the Project:

To be determined, but all beneficiaries will meet low- and moderate-income guidelines.

Total number of individuals served

To be determined

Total Low/Mod individuals served

To be determined

Please submit responses to the following questions:

Project Name: *East Pleasant Street: Affordable Housing Feasibility Study and Hazardous Material Mitigation*

Project Location: *235 East Pleasant Street, Town Center*

Census Block Group: *25-015-820500-2*

A. Please describe in full the project for which you are requesting funding:

Include information on the number of individuals or families to be served and who they are, i.e. disabled, low-income, homeless, etc.

The Town of Amherst purchased the property at 235 East Pleasant Street with funds from the Community Preservation Act (CPA) for the purpose of affordable housing. Town staff from the Planning Department determined that due to the zoning and environmental requirements, the site is suitable for a single-family home or a duplex. The existing farmhouse on the property is of timber frame construction possibly dating to the late 18th century. However, the house is in poor condition.

The Town is requesting funds to complete a thorough feasibility study of the house. The study will first assess the structure and provide cost estimates and preliminary plans for converting it into a two-family. If it cannot be cost effectively reused as a two-family, the study will provide preliminary plans and costs for constructing new affordable housing on the property. As part of its due diligence and site preparation, the Town must mitigate known hazardous materials—asbestos siding, lead paint and soil contamination in the basement. The Town is therefore requesting funds to complete this mitigation.

The project will benefit low and moderate income persons or families by providing two units of affordable housing.

B. What is the community's need for the proposed project/program?

Define the need or problem to be addressed by the proposed project. Explain why the project is important. Provide evidence of the severity of the need or problem. Who are the affected population and why is this population presently underserved or not served?

The cost of living in Amherst, as evidenced by the median home value of approximately \$330,000, far exceeds local annual wages that average \$55,000. The cost of a single-family home is beyond the means of the general workforce, and much beyond the means of low and moderate income persons and families, especially the homeless. The 2003 update to the Affordable Housing Plan corroborates these figures by identifying a strong need for affordable housing for individuals and families. For example, the Amherst Housing Authority had a list of over 200 households (single individuals and families) applying for 11 units of rental housing at their Main Street development

C. Community Involvement:

What process was used to select this particular project? How was the process responsive to expressed community need?

Since the property was purchased with funds from the Community Preservation Act, it went through a months-long process that gained support from Town staff, boards and committees, and eventually the vote of Town Meeting to create affordable housing on the property. The Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee, CPA Committee and Town Meeting members support the development of affordable housing on this property. These same boards and committees, in addition to the Amherst Housing Authority and various other local organizations have for years requested funding to increase affordable housing and housing opportunities in Amherst. The recent master planning process, which involved hundreds of volunteers and spanned almost two years, also identified increasing housing opportunities for low and moderate income as a high priority for the community.

In order to develop affordable housing on the site, a feasibility study needs to first be completed to determine if the house can be cost-effectively rehabilitated. If rehabilitation is not feasible and too costly for affordable housing, construction of new housing will be assessed.

Define the process that will be used to maintain involvement of the project beneficiaries in the implementation of the project.

Town staff, boards and committees, and the low- and moderate-income community will be involved through meetings, public forums and at public hearings when formal presentations are made by interested parties.

D. Project Feasibility

The project impact will be evaluated upon the extent to which the response meets the following criteria:

1. Describe what evidence exists to show that the community at large or project beneficiaries will use the project. Include documentation of demand for the activity through summary descriptions of surveys, inquiries, waiting lists or past participation.

The need for affordable housing cannot be stated more clearly than the recent waiting list of over 200 households (single individuals and families) applying for 11 units of rental housing at the Amherst Housing Authority's Main Street project completed last year. The Master Plan and the Community Development Strategy also identify increasing affordable housing opportunities as a high priority for the Town.

2. If applicable, describe and document the availability and source of matching or other funds needed to complete the project.

At this time there are no matching funds available for this project.

3. Identify the roles and responsibilities of all personnel involved in the project as well as internal controls.

Town staff from Conservation and Planning will be responsible for working with relevant boards and committees (i.e. Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee) to develop a scope of work, select the consultant(s), and comply with all procurement and CDBG regulations.

4. Citing past accomplishments, document that the agency has the necessary past expertise to conduct the activity and has successfully completed past activities in a timely manner.

Town staff has considerable experience working with consultants to develop plans, assessment reports, and mitigation of hazardous materials.

5. Please submit a program budget that includes all sources of revenue and all expenses.

Financial support for this project would be solely from CDBG funds, and the budget would consist of the following:

<i>Feasibility study and preliminary site plans</i>	<i>\$30,000</i>
<i>Mitigation of hazardous materials</i>	
<i>Asbestos</i>	<i>\$15,000</i>
<i>Soil contamination</i>	<i>\$15,000</i>
<i>Lead paint</i>	<i>\$20,000</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>\$80,000</i>

6. Please submit a time line with milestones, including a start and end date that demonstrates that this project is feasible (will be complete) within 18 months.

The Town will follow the procurement regulations and sign a contract after successful bidding and consultant selection. The terms of the contract will include a scope of work that details project deliverables, and a timeline stating that the project will be completed prior to the 18 month deadline. It is expected that the feasibility study and hazardous material mitigation will take no more than 6 months to complete.

7. Please identify the staff that will be directly responsible for implementing this activity.

Town staff from the Office of Conservation & Development, including conservation and planning, the Department of Public Works, and the Director of Facilities will be responsible for implementing this activity.

E. Impact

Describe the impact the activity will have on the specifically identified needs. What measurable improvements will result from the activity? How much of the need will be addressed? Define the direct and indirect outcomes that will result from the project. Identify quantitative and qualitative measures to determine that the outcomes are achieved.

This will make a small, but significant contribution to increasing the availability of affordable housing in Amherst and will contribute to the continued effort by the Town to provide housing for its most vulnerable citizens.

F. Evaluation

Goals & Assessments: Please explain your short-term goals and long-term goals. Describe the changes in the target population that indicate the program's success. How will these changes be measured? Will anticipated changes affect the municipality's responsibility to this target population? How will the impact of this service on individual clients be tracked over time? Will there be additional beneficiaries? Will this service enable clients to become self-sufficient? How is this service linked to other human/social service programs in the community?

The Town's short and long-term goals, as identified in the Master Plan and Community Development Strategy, are to significantly increase the availability of affordable housing for low-and moderate-income households, and to diversify the type of housing in Amherst to meet the needs of other demographics—elderly, workforce housing, disabled individuals. Completing a feasibility study and safely removing hazardous materials will help the Town increase affordable housing opportunities.

G. Agency Information

Please provide an overview of your organization, including length of time in existence, experience in successfully conducting activities for which funding is being sought, and skills and current services that reflect capacity for success.

The Town offers high level government services, quality education, support for open space and agriculture, promotion of economic development, and respect for its history. Town government has been in existence for decades, with numerous departments and citizen boards and committees all working toward common goals that benefit its citizens and the community. Currently, Amherst has professional staff in all of its departments, in particular its Accounting, Conservation, Planning, Facilities, and Public Works Departments who commonly work with consultants and property owners to manage and develop such projects as land acquisition, feasibility studies and assessments, development of engineering specifications, and construction projects ranging from public infrastructure to affordable housing. Town staff is competent with procurement regulations, balancing budgets, and efficiently managing contracts so that deliverables are received on time. The Office of Conservation and Development, who will be working closely with the consultant(s) to develop the feasibility study, is the same staff who

- *worked with various boards and committees to initiate the development of Olympia Drive, a 40-unit, multi-million dollar affordable housing project;*
- *worked with consultants to conduct a build out analysis for the community in 2002;*
- *worked with architects and consultants to rehabilitate and restore the North Amherst School; and*
- *commonly work with appraisers and consultants to develop feasibility studies, architectural plans and cost estimates for various projects; and*